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Gender architecture for the United Nations: revised estimates to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The existing United Nations architecture dealing with gender equality and the empowerment of women is fragmented and lacks the necessary coherence to achieve maximum impact. To strengthen the Organization's capability to fulfil its mandates related to women, the present report proposes the establishment of a post of executive director for gender equality and advancement of women for the proposed new office on gender equality and advancement of women. The executive director would work on the details of the basic structure of the new office and would oversee the development of the new entity in consultation with the relevant intergovernmental bodies and institutions of the United Nations system.

Additional resources in the amount of $306,500 gross ($279,300 net) would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

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I. Introduction

1. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) most recently reaffirmed Member States' commitment to fully and effectively implement the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[1] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (resolutions S-23/2, annex, and S-23/3, annex) as an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration (see resolution 55/2); and recognized the importance of strengthening the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender.

2. The World Summit Outcome also called for a stronger system-wide coherence by, inter alia, strengthening linkages between the normative work of the United Nations system and its operational activities and ensuring that the main horizontal themes, including gender, were taken into account in decision-making throughout the system.

3. In his report aimed at facilitating the intergovernmental review of all mandates older than five years (A/60/733 and Corr.1) mandated in paragraph 163 (b) of the World Summit Outcome, the Secretary-General included consideration of gender equality and empowerment of women. He highlighted that for the past 30 years gender equality and empowerment issues had been increasingly cutting across the work of the United Nations, like such other critical issues as the environment, peacebuilding, human rights law and humanitarian assistance. The Secretary-General noted that intergovernmental processes had been created to address the latter cross-cutting issues, including in their institutional set-up. He called for equal attention on gender and clearly stated that there was a need to move towards improved clarity in institutional responsibilities and more concerted action in relation to gender equality. There was a need to assess progress made across the system, the gaps and challenges remaining and ways to improve outcomes".

4. To that end, the Secretary-General requested the High-level Panel on System-Wide Coherence to review the contribution of the United Nations system to achieving gender equality and to make recommendations on how gender equality perspectives could be better integrated into the work of the Organization. The High-level Panel provided the Secretary-General with a proposal on a new United Nations gender architecture.

5. The Secretary-General decided to pursue aspects of the gender architecture recommendation by launching an intensive in-house consultative process with all relevant United Nations departments, offices and organizations involved in this issue, inter alia, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). That consultation process took place in the context of meetings of the Policy Committee, as well as a Task Force on Gender chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Chef de Cabinet, which reviewed the proposal and adapted it to the needs of the United Nations.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

6. The high level of commitment by Member States and the Secretary-General to the empowerment of women and gender equality is fully supported by civil society and other non-State actors who have also been advocating the strengthening and consolidation of the United Nations system's gender-related work and institutions. That worldwide momentum for the advancement of gender equality, combined with the scope and complexities associated with pre-existing gender inequalities and discrimination, deserve urgent and special attention on the part of the General Assembly.

7. In response to these and previous mandates (see also annex II) and urgent calls for action, the purpose of the present report is to propose a process that will lead to a strengthened and consolidated United Nations gender architecture through the establishment of a post of executive director on gender equality and advancement of women at the level of Under-Secretary-General. One of the main tasks of the executive director would be to work with a small team of existing United Nations staff to develop the details of the new gender architecture.

II. Background

A. Current intergovernmental processes

8. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates, constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism with the primary role in policymaking on gender equality and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

9. The Second Committee of the General Assembly addresses issues concerning women in development on a biannual basis, while the Third Committee has two agenda items devoted specifically to gender equality and focuses in particular on the human rights of women. Since 1997, the Economic and Social Council and its commissions have paid greater attention to gender mainstreaming in follow-up to its agreed conclusions 1997/2.[2] The Commission on the Status of Women plays a central role in monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and in promoting gender mainstreaming at the national level and within the United Nations system. The Commission will increase its focus on monitoring progress in implementation at the national level and will facilitate sharing of national-level experience and good practices. Since 2000, the Security Council has held annual debates on women, peace and security, including on the overall implementation of its resolution 1325 (2000) and on specific themes such as violence against women and women's political representation.

10. The newly created Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council provide important new opportunities for accelerating implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[3] Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the gender equality commitments in the World Summit Outcome. Efforts need to be made to ensure that the development of mandates, structures, working methods and

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

other procedures of these bodies are based on international norms and standards on gender equality and empowerment of women.

B. Current gender architecture

11. The United Nations entities that carry out the mandates in the context of the current gender architecture are as follows (see also annex III):

(a) The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women;

(b) The Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat;

(c) UNIFEM;

(d) The International Institute for Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW);

(e) Gender units and focal points in United Nations entities (for gender mainstreaming) and departmental focal points (for gender balance);

(f) Gender theme groups (at the country level);

(g) Inter-agency mechanisms.

C. Challenges

12. In the 10 years since the Fourth World Conference on Women, significant progress has been made by the United Nations towards implementation of the intergovernmental mandates, including the Beijing Platform for Action. At the same time, a critical analysis of the United Nations system-wide capacities for gender equality and gender mainstreaming shows that the current system-wide gender architecture is too incoherent, underresourced and fragmented to provide effective support to Member States, in particular at the country level, where it is difficult to integrate norms and standards seamlessly into policy and operational support.

13. That situation is further exacerbated by the fragmentation of intergovernmental and national decision-making institutions, which frequently lack the commitment, knowledge and capacity to implement policies and other initiatives at the country level in order to address the lack of gender equality and women's empowerment.

14. Moreover, such institutional and intergovernmental weaknesses have had an impact on the ability of the United Nations to speak as one powerful voice on behalf of women and have diminished its effectiveness in promoting and advocating for women's rights and empowerment with multiple constituencies, including Governments, non-governmental organizations and the broader civil society, including the media.

III. The way forward: why the United Nations needs a new gender architecture

15. To enable the United Nations to address the above challenges and more effectively pursue gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women, a

system-wide effort will be required to strengthen and consolidate the Organization's gender architecture. Such an effort should, however, build on the strengths and comparative advantages and mandates of all key United Nations entities working in the area.

16. Moreover, it should be underscored that even with a stronger and consolidated United Nations gender architecture, the commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment is and should remain the responsibility of the entire United Nations system. Responsibility and accountability for the integration of gender equality concerns cannot be held by one United Nations entity alone, regardless of its size and influence.

17. A new United Nations gender architecture would need to be able to enhance the links between norms and standards, policies and operational work in order to have an impact on women's empowerment and gender equality, especially on the ground, by: (a) engaging Governments and their national machineries for women; (b) enhancing country and regional monitoring capacity; (c) ensuring systematic feedback for intergovernmental decision-making; (d) deploying gender advisers to countries and regions and establishing standing capacities for rapid deployment of gender experts and field support; and (e) providing advice to Governments, upon request, on gender equality capacity-building and technical assistance.

18. A consolidated gender entity, with sufficient status, authority and resources would be able: (a) to recommend good practices and replicable models to all countries, bringing together Governments, United Nations partners and civil society organizations to formulate and adopt legal and policy frameworks for gender equality; (b) to facilitate their implementation through institutions that are gender-sensitive; (c) to increase the capacity of Governments and gender equality advocates to make the case for their implementation; and (d) to change attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate gender inequality in society. That entity would be able to achieve these results to the extent that it had sufficient presence and authority at the United Nations country team level and could inspire and mobilize partnerships for change. To do so, it must be connected to a constituency at the country level that can ensure that the system is responsive to the actual realities of women, in particular poor and excluded women.

IV. Proposed institutional arrangements for the new office on gender equality and advancement of women

19. In considering possible institutional arrangements for the proposed new office on gender equality and advancement of women, the Secretary-General evaluated various institutional settings, including the one proposed by his High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, on the basis of the following broad desired characteristics:

(a) High-level presence both at Headquarters and in the field;

(b) Collaboration and synergy with other United Nations entities;

(c) A sound financial base;

(d) Administrative autonomy and flexibility;

(e) Cost-effective and economical operation.

20. Against this background, the new office proposed by the Secretary-General would maintain a work programme and management structure independent of any particular department or office and would enjoy a high degree of functional autonomy, operational flexibility and enhanced fund-raising opportunities.

21. The following broad institutional arrangements are proposed:

(a) Consolidation of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women and UNIFEM to make the new office stronger and more effective along the lines indicated in General Assembly resolution 60/1. An executive director, at the level of Under-Secretary-General, would head the office. The executive director would also be the chief adviser to the Secretary-General on gender equality and women's empowerment issues;

(b) The new office would combine the normative, analytical and monitoring as well as focused operational mandates and responsibilities of the current gender architecture. It would be a catalyst for technical and policy matters and the authority on gender equality and women's empowerment issues around the world, with the support of high-quality technical and substantive expertise. Its functions would include:

(i) Facilitating and advising on system-wide policies for gender equality and women's empowerment;

(ii) Undertaking global advocacy efforts on issues critical to women's empowerment and gender equality, including the publication of flagship reports;

(iii) Monitoring and evaluating the integration of gender equality objectives across the United Nations system, including departments of the Secretariat and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

(iv) Monitoring the institutional performance of the United Nations system with regard to the achievement of gender balance goals;

(v) Supporting the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment concerns in intergovernmental bodies for development, humanitarian assistance, environment, human rights, peacekeeping and peacebuilding;

(vi) Providing substantive and technical servicing to the Commission on the Status of Women;

(vii) Providing policy and technical advice and guidance to United Nations country and regional teams to ensure that gender equality concerns are mainstreamed in the support provided to nationally led poverty reduction and development plans;

(viii) Undertaking regional and national advocacy to put issues critical to women's empowerment on the policy agenda;

(ix) Facilitating innovation, sharing lessons and enabling institutional learning throughout the system;

(x) Serving as a catalyst through innovative and experimental proof-of-concept activities, benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities and the objectives set out in the Beijing Platform for Action, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(xi) Strengthening and monitoring accountability across the resident coordinator system and assisting resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to meet their responsibilities for gender mainstreaming;

(xii) Establishing institutional linkages and overall coordination with INSTRAW,[4] the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict;

(xiii) Establishing institutional linkages and overall coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000);

(c) The executive director of the office would report to the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and the General Assembly, through the Secretary-General, on its normative and analytical work, and to the Executive Board of the UNDP/United Nations Population Fund/office on its programmatic work. The office would be an integral part of the United Nations country teams as well as the "One Country Programme" arrangements as they commence. To reduce costs and increase effectiveness, the entity would share common services at the Headquarters and field levels, where available;

(d) The office would be funded from a combination of assessed and voluntary contributions. Normative and analytical activities would continue to be funded from the regular budget, supplemented by voluntary contributions. Advisory and catalytic programming work should be fully and ambitiously funded entirely from voluntary contributions;

(e) The functions currently performed by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women regarding improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat would be transferred to the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat.

V. Establishment of the post of executive director for gender equality and advancement of women

22. It is proposed that the office be headed by an executive director, at the level of Under-Secretary-General. The executive director would oversee the transition from the existing gender institutional setting to a new consolidated office in close consultation with the relevant intergovernmental bodies and institutions of the United Nations system. The executive director would be temporarily attached to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and staffed with existing human resources, pending a decision of the General Assembly on the institutional and organizational details of the new office. More detailed responsibilities of the

[4] INSTRAW is into the category of United Nations research and training institutes and it is proposed that its future institutional setting be examined by the General Assembly in connection with that of other United Nations training institutes.

executive director are listed in the proposed terms of reference (annex I). The Secretary-General Designate would appoint the executive director.

VI. Budgetary implications related to the establishment of the new office

23. The proposal to establish the new office headed by an executive director would require the establishment of a post at the Under-Secretary-General level. He/she would be assisted by a special assistant at the P-3 level and an administrative assistant (General Service (Other level)). Given the transitional nature of the office, it is envisaged that the P-3 and the General Service posts would be made available through secondment from UNIFEM and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women/Division for the Advancement of Women, respectively, on a non-reimbursable basis.

24. Accordingly, resource requirements in the amount of $157,500 would provide for salaries and common staff costs related to the establishment of the post of the executive director at the Under-Secretary-General level.

25. The estimated requirements under non-post items in the amount of $121,800 would provide for one-time costs related to alteration of office space ($72,500) and acquisition of furniture and fixtures for the office ($33,000), rental of premises ($11,000), acquisition of office automation equipment ($2,000) and other operating expenses ($3,300).

26. The overall requirements are estimated at $306,500 gross ($279,300 net) for the biennium 2006-2007. The breakdown of the requirements by budget section is presented below.

Additional requirements for appropriation during the biennium 2006-2007

(United States dollars)

Section 1. Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	162 800
Section 28D. Office of Central Support Services	116 500
Section 35. Staff assessment	27 200
Total requirements (gross)	**306 500**

27. The additional resource requirements would be considered in connection with the provisions governing the contingency fund (see General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211). In that regard, it is recalled that the Assembly, in its resolution 59/278, approved a contingency fund for the biennium 2006-2007 in the amount of $27.2 million. The balance of the contingency fund following decisions taken by the Assembly amounts to $637,300.

VII. Conclusions

28. An end to poverty, access to good education and healthcare, freedom from violence, protection of reproductive rights and sustainable livelihoods are still basic

objectives of gender equality work worldwide. The World Summit Outcome recognized that progress for women was progress for all. Achieving gender equality is one of the primary and enduring responsibilities of all Governments and therefore one of the pre-eminent areas in which the United Nations needs to assist its Member States.

29. An effective and consolidated gender architecture should create a more supportive environment for Governments to meet their commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, with special focus on implementation at the country level. This vision should be effectively supported by coordinated and coherent action on the part of the United Nations system, with each entity being focused on its comparative advantages and mandates and carrying out high-impact and cost-effective gender-related activities, programmes and policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment and rights.

30. The ultimate goal of this change should be an increased capacity of the United Nations system to turn gender equality commitments into reality so that individual women and girls see a real difference in their lives.

VIII. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

31. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) **To endorse in principle the creation of an office on gender equality and advancement of women, along the lines described in the present report, pending intergovernmental and inter-organizational consultations;**

(b) **To approve the establishment of a post of executive director at the Under-Secretary-General level;**

(c) **To appropriate a total of $306,500, comprising $162,800 under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, $116,500 under section 28D, Office of Central Support Services, and $27,200 under section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.**

Annex I

Proposed terms of reference for the Executive Director

1. Under the authority of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director for Gender Equality and Advancement of Women will be the chief adviser to the Secretary-General on gender equality and women's empowerment issues, entrusted with a dual mandate combining normative, analytical and monitoring functions with policy advisory and catalytic programming functions.

2. The Executive Director will oversee the transition from the existing gender institutional setting to a new consolidated Office by, inter alia:

(a) Establishing and managing a team of United Nations staff to work on the details of the consolidated gender entity;

(b) Engaging with the rest of the United Nations system to ensure a smooth transition;

(c) Engaging and following up with Member States during the intergovernmental process required to establish the new gender entity;

(d) Engaging with civil society to support the transition process.

3. The Executive Director will oversee the implementation of the functions of the Office, which will include:

(a) Facilitating and advising on system-wide policies for gender equality and women's empowerment;

(b) Undertaking global advocacy efforts on issues critical to women's empowerment and gender equality, including the publication of flagship reports;

(c) Monitoring and evaluating, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the integration of gender equality objectives across the United Nations system, including the departments of the Secretariat, funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

(d) Monitoring the institutional performance of the United Nations system with regard to the achievement of gender balance goals;

(e) Supporting the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment concerns in intergovernmental bodies for development, humanitarian assistance, environment, human rights, peacekeeping and peacebuilding;

(f) Providing substantive and technical servicing to the Commission on the Status of Women;

(g) Providing policy and technical advice and guidance to United Nations country and regional teams to ensure that gender equality concerns are mainstreamed in the support provided to nationally led poverty reduction and development plans;

(h) Undertaking regional and national advocacy to put issues critical to women's empowerment on the policy agenda;

(i) Facilitating innovation, sharing lessons and enabling institutional learning throughout the system;

(j) Serving as a catalyst through innovative and experimental proof-of-concept activities, benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities and the objectives set out in the Beijing Platform for Action,[5] Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[6]

(k) Strengthening and monitoring accountability across the resident coordinator system and assisting resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to meet their responsibilities for gender mainstreaming;

(l) Establishing institutional linkages and overall coordination with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict;

(m) Establishing institutional linkages and overall coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

4. The Executive Director will be part of all existing senior management committees and a full member of the United Nations Chief System Executives Board for Coordination.

5. The Executive Director will work closely with Governments and civil society organizations, strengthening networks already established at the global, national and local levels.

[5] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Annex II

Mandates

1. The mandate of gender equality and advancement of women derives from the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations establishing that the work of the United Nations is based on the equal rights of men and women, as well as from its Article 8, which states that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

2. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[7] adopted by 189 Member States at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 is the global policy framework for gender equality, empowerment of women and women's human rights. While Governments bear the main responsibility for implementation of the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action in 12 critical areas of concern, the Platform calls for its implementation to be carried out through the cooperation of all of the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system on the basis of "an enhanced framework for international cooperation for gender issues"[8] to ensure integrated and comprehensive implementation. As a result, the institutional capacity of the United Nations system to carry out and coordinate its responsibility for implementation should be improved[9] and responsibility for implementation of the Platform and integration of a gender perspective must rest at the highest levels.[10]

3. The Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2,[11] adopted in July 1997, defined the concept of gender mainstreaming and made specific recommendations on the incorporation of gender perspectives into intergovernmental processes, institutional requirements for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system, including gender specialists and capacity-building; and gender mainstreaming in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences. The Council also specifically called on the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to ensure a systemic integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes.

4. In the five-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, at its twenty-third special session, the General Assembly adopted a political declaration (resolution S-23/2, annex) and an outcome document, entitled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" (resolution S-23/3, annex). Governments recommitted themselves to implement the Platform for Action and reaffirmed the importance of gender mainstreaming in all areas and at all levels.

5. In its resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council emphasized the responsibility of all States to protect women and girls from human rights abuses, including gender-based violence; to enhance women's participation in all peace

[7] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[8] Ibid., annex II, para. 306.

[9] Ibid., para. 307.

[10] Ibid., para. 308.

[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV, para. 4.

processes; and to mainstream gender perspectives in all aspects of conflict prevention, resolution and reconstruction. Five subsequent presidential statements on women, peace and security (S/PRST/2001/31, S/PRST/2002/32, S/PRST/2004/40, S/PRST/2005/52 and S/PRST/2006/42) provided a solid framework for further action.

6. In September 2000, the General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), in which it recognized the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that was truly sustainable; and resolved to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.[12]

7. As a follow-up to the Millennium Summit, eight Millennium Development Goals were defined as time-bound, measurable goals to focus the world's development efforts on achieving a number of strategic objectives by 2015. A specific goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women was set (goal 3). There is recognition that gender equality is critical to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals.

8. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), Member States reaffirmed that gender equality was essential to advance development, security and peace; reaffirmed also that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Platform for Action was an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals; and highlighted the importance of and made specific commitments regarding, reproductive health, education, employment, human rights, violence against women, access to productive assets and resources, representation in decision-making and conflict prevention and resolution.

9. This policy framework is complemented by normative work on gender equality in human rights under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Annex III

Current gender architecture

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
(Staffing: 1 ASG, 2 D-1, 2 Professional and 4 GS posts)

1. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women was set up in 1997 to advise the Secretary-General and to provide vision, advocacy for and monitoring implementation of gender equality within the United Nations system itself and gender mainstreaming in the work of the entire Organization. Its mandates are as follows:

(a) Mainstreaming of a system-wide gender perspective into all activities of the United Nations, taking into account the mandates of the bodies concerned;[13]

(b) Coordination of policy within the United Nations for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including substantive servicing of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (General Assembly resolution 50/203 (para. 30));

(c) Coordination of issues related to the nexus of women, peace and security (Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and related presidential statements);

(d) Achievement, within the United Nations, including the Secretariat, of gender balance (General Assembly resolution 39/245, para. 5).

Division for the Advancement of Women
(Staffing: 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 20 Professional and 11 GS)

2. Since 1946, first a Section on the Status of Women, then the Branch for the Promotion of Equality for Men and Women and now the Division for the Advancement of Women has been servicing the Commission on the Status of Women. Since its inception, the Division has been responsible for servicing the intergovernmental processes and policy outcomes, as well as the normative processes through the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.[14] The Division has specific links to national machineries for the advancement of women and provides some capacity-building to Member States in its areas of competency.[15] The Division's major functions are to advise the Special Adviser; to prepare reports and other documentation on a variety of subject matters related to the advancement of women; and to provide substantive and secretariat services to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the Third Committee of the General Assembly and support for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The substantive servicing of the Convention is to be transferred to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

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[13] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 326, and General Assembly resolution 60/1, paras. 58, 59, 116, 134 (d) and 166.

[14] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[15] *Report of the Fourth World Conference ...*, op. cit., paras. 327 and 328.

United Nations Development Fund for Women
(Staffing: 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 97 Professional, of whom 56 are in the field, 40 national staff and 69 GS, 47 of them in the field)

3. In its resolution 39/125, the General Assembly re-established the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) as a separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme with a mandate to serve as a catalyst to ensure the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities, to support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities, and to support the overall United Nations system to enhance its performance on strengthening women's empowerment. Successive resolutions have broadened and deepened the original mandate of UNIFEM, including General Assembly resolutions 50/166 and 59/250, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
(Staffing: 1 D-2, 3 Professional and 5 GS)

4. The objectives of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) are to assist, through research, training and collection of information, the advancement of women and their integration in the development process both as participants and beneficiaries (Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/27).

Gender units and focal points in United Nations entities

5. Specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system work on specific actions within their respective mandates, realign priorities and redirect resources to meet the global priorities of the Beijing Platform for Action.[16] Other international institutions and organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, work to ensure that investments and programmes benefit women and contribute to sustainable development. Each organization has either gender focal points or a gender unit of variable size and staffing.

6. Gender units in peacekeeping missions have been set up in 8 out of 17 peacekeeping missions to facilitate the integration of gender perspectives into the substantive work of United Nations peace support missions, advise mission leadership on gender issues and maintain liaison with women's organizations and national machineries for women.

Gender theme groups

7. United Nations country teams, led by the resident coordinators, and gender theme groups, mostly led by UNIFEM, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund, provide support to Governments of host countries as they seek to integrate gender perspectives into their policies, programmes, legislation, budgets and data-collection mechanisms through such instruments as the common country assessment, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, poverty reduction strategy papers and the consolidated appeal process. In an increasing number of countries, United Nations gender theme groups promote

[16] Ibid., paras. 336-341.

the importance of achieving gender equality through advocacy, technical support, capacity-building, and community interventions.

Inter-agency mechanisms

8. Inter-agency mechanisms are as follows:

(a) The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality is a network of senior gender focal points in United Nations offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes. Chaired by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Network works through annual meetings and ad hoc task forces on specific priority themes. It is a forum for information exchange, collaboration and coordination on gender equality issues, in particular on gender mainstreaming, across the United Nations system. As well as contributing to intergovernmental processes, the Network has developed a variety of tools and methodologies to strengthen the operational work of the United Nations system. The reports of the annual meetings of the Network are transmitted to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

(b) Since April 2006, the two high-level committees of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, on programme and management, respectively, have been closely involved in discussions on a system-wide policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues in cooperation with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. Both committees endorsed the proposed system-wide policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming. At its session in late 2006, the Chief Executives Board approved the system-wide policy and strategy;

(c) The United Nations Development Group's Task Force on Gender Mainstreaming, chaired by UNIFEM, coordinates action among its 16 member agencies in mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment and ensures that these are incorporated into tools, accountability mechanisms and guidance the Group gives to United Nations country teams;

(d) Other inter-agency bodies on specific issues are supported by different entities of the system, such as girl education (United Nations Children's Fund), peace and security (the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Task Force on Gender) and HIV/AIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS). The Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs has established a cluster on advancement of women to enhance coordination and coherence, which is led by the Division for the Advancement of Women.